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Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00
ERDA-05 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 INR-07 IO-13
L-03 NSF-01 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-06 SS-15 SP-02
INT-05 /096 W
----------041247Z 056001 /53
R 041010Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5274

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FOR OES/ENP/EN, EA/J

DEPT PASS TO CEQ AND EPA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SENV, JA
SUBJECT: SHINTARO ISHIHARA, NEW ENVIRONMENT AGENCY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

REF: TOKYO 18861

1. SINCE TAKING OFFICE AS STATE MINISTER IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AT END OF LAST YEAR, SHINTARO ISHIHARA, YOUNGEST OF ALL MEMBERS OF PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA'S CABINET AND NOVELIST-TURNED-POLITICIAN, HAS MADE NEWS ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, ELICITING SURPRISE AND EVEN CRITICISM FROM HIS SUBORDINATES AT ENVIRONMENT AGENCY--BUREAUCRATS WHO BY NATURE RESIST FRESH IDEAS AND QUICK ACTIONS.

2. EA OFFICIALS HIT HARDEST THUS FAR BY ISHIHARA'S PUBLIC UTTERANCES ARE THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR DRAFTING A BILL ON ENVIRON-MENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT. THEY WERE FLABBERGASTED WHEN ISHIHARA IN A MEETING ON JANUARY 25 WITH THE NATIONAL LIAISON COUNCIL ON
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ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION CONTROL, THREW COLD WATER UPON THE PROPOSED BILL, WHICH EA'S PLANNING AND COORDINATION BUREAU HAD TAKEN GREAT PAINS TO WORK OUT IN COORDINATION WITH OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. ISHIHARA TOLD THE VISITORS THAT SOME DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS HAVE THE MERIT OF BENEFITING LOCAL COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY IN DE-POPULATED AREAS. THE REMARKS DELIGHTED INDUSTRY SEGMENTS OPPOSED TO EARLY ENACTMENT OF THE PROPOSED BILL BUT CAME AS A SHOCK TO

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EA OFFICIALS CONCERNED.

3. ISHIHARA HAS BEEN QUICK IN GIVING SHAPE TO HIS IDEAS. ON JAN. 21, HE ORGANIZED A GROUP CALLED THE FORUM ON THE AMENITIES. THE IDEA WAS TO MAP OUT STRATEGY FOR DOING AWAY WITH WHAT HE CALLED QTE VIOLENCE TO THE SENSES UNQTE TAKING THE FORM OF ROADSIDE SIGNBOARDS AND GARBAGE TRUCK CHIMES. ISHIHARA REPORTEDLY CHOSE ALL THE 22 MEMBERS OF THE GROUP HIMSELF. THEY INCLUDE WELL-KNOWN AUTHORS, MOVIE DIRECTORS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, INDUSTRIAL DESIGNERS, POETS, ARCHITECTS, AND SCHOLARS. THE GROUP HELD ITS FIRST MEETING FEB. 1 AND HAD A TWO-HOUR EXERCISE IN FREE EXPRESSION. EA OFFICIALS DOUBT THAT TALKS BORDERING ON POLEMICS WILL LEAD TO CONCRETE PROPOSALS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION IN A SHORT SPAN OF TIME BECAUSE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE PURSUIT OF "AMENITIES" ARE RELATED TO OTHER BROADER PROBLEMS SUCH AS URBAN REDEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND HIGHWAYS WHICH ARE OF CONCERN NOT ONLY TO EA BUT ARE ACTUALLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF VARIOUS OTHER AGENCIES.

4. THE FEELING OF DISCOMFITURE PREVAILING WITHIN EA IS REFLECTED IN A REMARK BY A LEADING OFFICIAL, QUOTED BY NIHON KEIZAI SHIMBUN: "ADMINISTRATIVE WORK DOES NOT RESULT FROM IDEAS ALONE. THERE WERE SOME DIRECTORS-GENERAL (BEFORE ISHIHARA) WHO WENT BEYOND THEIR COMPETENCE AND SCATTERED COMMITMENTS TO THE PUBLIC. MUCH OF THE WORK WE ARE DOING NOW IS TO PAY OFF SUCH DEBTS."
HODGSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: ENVIRONMENT, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 04-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Format: TEL
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770270/aaaackax.tel
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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SAS ID: 3402837
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHINTARO ISHIHARA, NEW ENVIRONMENT AGENCY DIRECTOR- GENERAL
TAGS: SENV, JA, (ISHIHARA, SHINTARO)
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Type: TE
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